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Foreign Law Specialist Series

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Foreign Law Specialist Series

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SERIES DEFINITION

This series includes positions which perform professional work requiring knowledge of law as it is practiced in one or more foreign countries; library objectives, functions, techniques, and services; and, the political, economic, and social systems of particular foreign countries. Most positions also require the ability to translate and interpret technical legal material from a foreign language into English and from English into a foreign language. Positions in this series perform legal research, reference, and writing assignments requiring expert analysis and interpretation of the legal systems of particular foreign countries in terms of Anglo-American law concepts; provide definitive advice and assistance to the three branches of Government on matters associated with foreign law; and, provide other specialized services in the acquisition, processing, and custody of foreign legal collections.

COVERAGE

This standard applies to certain professional positions found in the Law Library of the Library of Congress. Positions covered by this standard perform a variety of complex and specialized law library functions which draw on such occupational areas as the [Legal and Kindred Group, GS-900](#); the [Library and Archives Group, GS-1400](#); the [Social Science, Psychology, and Welfare Group, GS-100](#); and, the [Information and Arts group, GS-1000](#). Although the principal requirements for performing the work are most closely related to those of lawyers and librarians, the work does not require admission to the American (U.S.) bar, or the services of a fully qualified librarian. Rather, this series involves work which makes use of the knowledge, skills, and abilities of one fully trained in the law and legal systems of one or more foreign countries, who can also perform substantive law library functions, such as collection development, reader assistance, and the preparation of bibliographic materials, scholarly publications, and research aids. Collaterally, the work requires knowledge, skills, and abilities found in certain social science occupations, and most positions require facility in one or more foreign languages.

EXCLUSIONS

1. Professional legal positions requiring admission to the American (U.S.) bar. Such positions are classified to the [General Attorney Series, GS-0905](#), or the [Patent Attorney Series, GS-1222](#).
2. Positions which primarily involve paralegal work not requiring professional legal competence. Such positions are classifiable in other series in the [Legal and Kindred Group, GS-0900](#).
3. Positions involving work that *primarily* requires a full professional knowledge of the theories, objectives, principles, and techniques of librarianship. Such positions are classifiable in the [Librarian Series, GS-1410](#).

4. Positions primarily concerned with processing and transmitting scientific, technological, or other specialized information which require a broad knowledge of one or more disciplines or fields of interest sufficient to understand the significance and relationship of the concepts and ideas contained in the information; a practical knowledge of documentation or library techniques; and, in some cases, a knowledge of foreign languages. Such positions are classifiable in the [Technical Information Services Series, GS-1412](#).
5. Positions the primary duties of which are to perform work in rendering from a foreign language into English or from English into a foreign language the spoken or written word, where the objective is accurate translations and/or interpretations. Such positions are classifiable in the [Language Specialist Series, GS-1040](#).
6. Positions primarily involving research or other professional and scientific work in the departmental formulation and direction of the foreign affairs of the Government or in the study and disposition of information bearing on international relations are classifiable to the [Foreign Affairs Series, GS-0130](#).
7. Positions which perform substantive multi-disciplinary research relating the law to various areas of the social sciences. Such positions are classifiable to appropriate series in the [Social Science, Psychology, and Welfare Group, GS-0100](#), or the [Legal and Kindred Group, GS-0900](#).

TITLES

No titles are specified for positions in this series. However, as the title of the series is reflective of the work performed, users may find the title *Foreign Law Specialist* appropriate. In constructing other titles, follow the guidance in the [Introduction to the Position Classification Standards](#).

NATURE OF THE WORK

Positions classified to this series typically serve as the primary resource for the reference, research, and interpretation of foreign law matters referred to the Library of Congress. They provide definitive advice and assistance to Members of Congress, Congressional Committees, Government agencies, the United States Supreme Court and other courts, and other users on complex legal questions, problems, and issues connected with the law and legal systems of particular foreign countries sharing a certain legal heritage. The work is analytical, evaluative, and interpretive; and is characterized by the exercise of independent judgment and discretion, and broad perspective. Since foreign legal concepts and practices are interrelated with the political, social, economic, cultural, and other factors associated with a particular country's historical development, the legal question, problem, or issue must be carefully interpreted in the context of these factors and must be accurately translated from the foreign legal idiom into terms which are understandable and meaningful to U.S. jurisprudence. This information, furnished orally or in

written form, may be requested in connection with the formulation of legislation, the preparation of cases by Federal lawyers, the adjudication of cases by the courts, the shaping of aspects of foreign policy, or for other purposes.

At the same time, Foreign Law Specialist positions are intimately involved with the development and enhancement of the law library collection in their assigned areas of specialization. They survey the Law Library's collections, noting deficiencies, recommending acquisitions, and making assessments of the value and treatment of published legal materials. They review incoming documents and assure appropriate disposition and technical processing, to make possible rapid and effective reference. They prepare comprehensive bibliographic materials and scholarly publications, and develop other research aids to assist users. Foreign Law Specialist positions also provide information and reader assistance to a variety of non-Government users of the Library, including members of the bar, university officials, students, and the general public.

GRADING POSITIONS

Positions classified to this series are evaluated by reference to the standard for [General Attorney, GS-0905](#); the [Librarian Series, GS-1410](#); and other appropriate standards relating to legal research, policy analysis, or similar work.

Positions classified in this series that meet the criteria of the [Supervisory Grade-Evaluation Guide](#) are to be graded by the criteria in that guide.